

Town of



Amherst Massachusetts

OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

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July 3, 2014

TO: Select Board

FROM: John P. Musante, Town Manager

SUBJECT: Self-Evaluation & FY 14 Town Manager Performance Goals – Progress Report

As part of my annual performance evaluation, as requested by the Select Board, I have prepared a Self-Evaluation Summary for your review and discussion at your July 7 meeting. The second part of this memo contains an update to my January 2014 report regarding progress on FY 14 performance goals.

Self-Evaluation Summary

I would like to list what I believe are the key highlights and accomplishments over the past year. Many of these would not have been achieved without the skill and dedication of the Town staff, the ongoing support and encouragement of the Select Board, and the input from and support of Town Meeting members, the hundreds of community volunteers on Town boards and committees, and the community at large.

- In February, Standard and Poors granted the Town of Amherst a bond rating upgrade to AA+ with a Stable Outlook. S & P cited strong budgetary performance and flexibility further bolstered by the Town's strong management conditions. This is reflective of the continued success we are having in operating our Town government and providing services in a fiscally sustainable way.
- On October 2, the Planning Board approved two development projects by Archipelago Investments that I believe represent the most profound on the ground realizations of the potential embodied in our Master Plan to date. Kendrick Place, in downtown Amherst across from Kendrick Park, will include 44,000 square feet of LEED-certified mixed-use residential on the upper floors and ground floor retail and incubator space for new businesses spinning out from UMass and area colleges. Olympia Place will house approximately 260 beds in suite style dormitory apartments in another LEED-certified complex located near the UMass campus at the end of Olympia Drive.
- The Town is aggressively taking steps to transform our Information Technology Department from a traditional cost center to a more entrepreneurial "productivity center" under the leadership of IT Director Kris Pacunas and his very talented staff. In 2013, we created the largest outdoor public wifi system in the Commonwealth in the heart of our downtown. The

Town and its IT Department applied in December and was awarded three Community Innovation Challenge (CIC) grants from the Commonwealth. Each of these initiatives will generate new revenues that leverage the Town's capital investments in its IT infrastructure.

- As chair of the PVTa Advisory Board, I successfully advocated for the PVTa to once again fund bus service to North Amherst beginning September 2014 that for the past 8 years following PVTa budget cuts was funded 100% by the Town. This reconfiguration of Routes 32 and 37 (Amity Shuttle) to a new combined Route 33 will save the Town over \$100,000 per year in operating costs and provide more frequent and faster service, including a bus stop at the Amherst Survival Center on Sunderland Road.
- The Town, in collaboration with the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management at UMass Boston, launched our AmherstStat program with initial focus on developing DPW, Police, and Fire Department performance measures.
- A data-driven Compensation Study of non-union positions was completed by our consultant Human Resources Services, Inc. with first-rate assistance from our HR Director Deb Radway. Subsequently, the Select Board unanimously voted to modernize our compensation plan for non-union employees to position the Town of Amherst as an employer of choice in Western Massachusetts.
- Chancellor Subbaswamy and I appointed a Town-Gown Study Steering Committee comprised of a broad and talented cross-section of stakeholders to advise us on our jointly funded study. A consultant team led by U3 Advisors is looking at techniques used by college towns across the country to address town-gown issues, review housing plans from the Town and expansion plans by the campus, and look at the economic development plans from the Town and UMass Amherst.
- I have recommended and received Select Board and Town Meeting approval to renovate primarily for handicapped accessibility purposes the East Street School in order to relocate LSSE administrative space and create new programming space in addition to the Bangs Community Center. This will allow up to 4000 square feet of basement space at the Bangs to be potentially occupied and leased in 2015 by a Community Health Center in partnership with the Hilltown Community Health Center and Cooley Dickinson Hospital. Its need has been documented by a multi-year planning process to link underserved residents (families; veterans; homeless; new Americans; seniors; seasonal workers, etc.) to essential health services (i.e. medical, dental, nutrition, social worker).
- The Town was awarded a Municipal Leading by Example Award by the Commonwealth's Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs in October 2013 for outstanding environmental and energy achievements.
- On June 11, the Town of Amherst was a recipient of one of the Massachusetts Housing Partnership's 2014 Housing Hero Awards for its collaborative efforts to address the town's affordable housing needs.
- In May, Town Meeting approved Article 34 establishing a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust, a tool being used successfully by 70 other Massachusetts communities to create and preserve affordable housing.
- At the June 3 Special Town Meeting, I was pleased to announce that EQR, the current owner of Rolling Green, has accepted an offer to purchase for Rolling Green from Beacon Communities, a well-respected owner and manager of affordable housing and Beacon's goal is to structure a transaction in which affordability at Rolling Green is maintained. Beacon owns and manages 12,000 apartments throughout the northeast and has extensive experience

in affordable and mixed-income housing. I convinced the local Community Preservation Act Committee to increase its commitment of CPA funds from \$750,000 to \$1,250,000. With these funds, Beacon will be able to preserve affordable housing at Rolling Green.

- 2014 road improvement projects in Amherst will total just over \$1 million funded from a combination of Chapter 90 grant funds, settlements, and water/sewer funds.
- In the first 6 months of implementing the Residential Rental Property Permitting Program Bylaw effective January 1, 2014 per recommendations from the Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods Work Group and approval by Town Meeting last year, 99% of properties have applied for permits. This extraordinary outreach by Town staff and the response by rental property owners are achieving the Town's primary objective for on the ground improvements in property upkeep including parking plans in many Amherst neighborhoods.
- Both the Select Board and I thanked our public safety first responders, applauded Chancellor Subbaswamy's response to the pre-St. Patrick's Day disturbances that marred a school year in which student discipline cases and related police calls for service actually declined from the prior year. supported the university's decision to hire former Boston Police Commissioner Ed Davis to develop strategies to prevent such occurrences from happening in the future, and pledged cooperation of Town and public safety leaders to review strategies and tactics with a completely open mind to how collectively we can each contribute to workable solutions.

FY 14 Town Manager Performance Goals – Progress Report

My input follows each of the twelve performance goals, shown in italics, developed last fall. The Progress Report includes initiatives, challenges, and accomplishments to date on the specific goals that also pertain to areas from the evaluation tool's Composite Evaluation section (Fiscal Management; Relationship with the Select Board and Town Meeting; Long Range Planning; Staff and Personnel Relations; Community and Intergovernmental Relations).

Fiscal Management

- I cite one independent measure of the continued success we are having in operating our Town government and providing services in a fiscally sustainable way. In February, Standard and Poors granted the Town of Amherst a bond rating upgrade to AA+ with a Stable Outlook. S & P cited strong budgetary performance and flexibility further bolstered by the Town's strong management conditions. The higher bond rating saves taxpayer dollars by reducing the interest we pay on borrowed funds for infrastructure, buildings, and equipment. This reflects well on the entire financial management team led by Sandy Pooler, Sonia Aldrich, Claire McGinnis, and Dave Burgess coupled with the cumulative efforts of staff with leadership and support of the Select Board, Finance Committee, and members of Town Meeting.
 1. *The Town Manager shall develop specific recommendations for consideration by the Select Board to address the ongoing revenue challenge, to include:*
 - a. *generating new revenue;*
- The FY 14 budget included approximately \$130,000 in new annual permit fee revenue paid by rental property owners to support the successful launch of the Town's Residential Rental

Property Permitting Bylaw approved by Annual Town Meeting in May 2013 as recommended by our Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods Work Group.

- For the adopted FY 15 budget, new growth added to the levy is estimated by our assessors at \$600,000, which is 114% of our 10-year average for new growth. Both new growth and building permits have been increasing, including downtown redevelopment and taxable student housing.
- On October 2, the Planning Board approved two development projects by Archipelago Investments that I believe represent the most profound on the ground realizations of the potential embodied in our Master Plan to date. Kendrick Place, in downtown Amherst across from Kendrick Park, will include 44,000 square feet of LEED-certified mixed-use residential on the upper floors and ground floor retail and incubator space for new businesses spinning out from UMass and area colleges. Olympia Place will house approximately 260 beds in suite style dormitory apartments in another LEED-certified complex located near the UMass campus at the end of Olympia Drive. Ground floor space will include an on-site management apartment. Construction has just begun on Kendrick Place and is scheduled to commence at Olympia Oaks this summer.
- Other projects of note under construction are Ron Laverdiere's mixed-use professional office building in the Pomeroy village center and the Trolley Barn with apartments and ground floor retail in North Amherst.
- In January, the Select Board approved my recommendation to adjust ambulance fees for the first time since 2009 to fund increased firefighter/EMT staffing levels articulated in my FY 15 spending plan.
- New rental income at North Amherst School is being generated from the Amherst Family Center in space formerly leased by Head Start.
- I testified, at the invitation of the Massachusetts Municipal Association, at a Joint House-Senate Ways and Means budget hearing this winter in Amherst on the need for the state to share an equitable portion of its projected 4.5% growth in state revenues with cities and towns, including increases in Unrestricted General Government Aid (UGGA) and urging the legislature to fund Chapter 90 local road repair at recommended \$300M instead of level funding at \$200 million for 5 more years. This spring, the legislature unanimously voted to recommend to the governor \$300 million per year for local road repairs that, if implemented by the governor, would provide an additional \$2 million to Amherst over the next 5 years to address of our backlog. Also, the legislature earlier this week sent to the governor a joint budget recommendation that would substantially increase UGGA and regional school transportation aid to the Town and school district.

b. reducing expenses through efficiencies in Town structure and service delivery, including regionalization of services where appropriate;

- The Town is aggressively taking steps to transform our Information Technology Department from a traditional cost center to a more entrepreneurial "productivity center" under the leadership of IT Director Kris Pacunas and his very talented staff. In 2013, we created the largest outdoor public wifi system in the Commonwealth in the heart of our downtown. The Town and its IT Department applied in December and was awarded three Community Innovation Challenge (CIC) grants from the Commonwealth, including regionalization of Cloud services with the Hampshire Council of Governments and a number of small towns

(Phases 1 & 2), provision of MUNIS platform services to support IT needs for the City of Northampton, and hosting of a property assessment software database for the Town of West Springfield. Each of these initiatives will generate new revenues that leverage the Town's capital investments in its IT infrastructure.

- Our Police Department partnered with the Belchertown, Pelham, and UMass Police Departments and was awarded a CIC grant for video surveillance equipment to be used to deter crime.
- The Town also supported the application for CIC funding by the City of Northampton to expand our already successful regional Sealer of Weights & Measures program begun more than a decade ago.
- As chair of the PVRTA Advisory Board, I successfully advocated for the PVRTA to once again fund bus service to North Amherst beginning September 2014 that for the past 8 years following PVRTA budget cuts was funded 100% by the Town. This reconfiguration of Routes 32 and 37 (Amity Shuttle) to a new combined Route 33 will save the Town over \$100,000 per year in operating costs and provide more frequent and faster service, including a bus stop at the Amherst Survival Center on Sunderland Road.
- The Town, in collaboration with the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management at UMass Boston, launched our AmherstStat program with initial focus on developing DPW, Police, and Fire Department performance measures. This spring, upon expiration of the grant, the Town retained the services of the Collins Center analyst to focus on implementation of an improved Town-wide automated work order system with primary focus on public works applications.
- I have also engaged the services of the Collins Center to update an analysis of the operational and financial benefits from a 3-town regional dispatch service that would be operated by Amherst from its existing Communications Center at the Police Department that would serve Amherst, Hadley, and Pelham. A report is expected this summer that will guide implementation during the coming year. If savings are realized from the pending completion of the Regional Dispatch Study for the Towns of Amherst, Hadley, and Pelham, I recommended in my FY 15 spending plan that the first \$62,908 of such savings be reinvested in public safety via the addition of a patrol officer for the downtown beat. Staffing levels do not currently allow for an officer assigned to downtown and many other sectors within town. Successful problem oriented policing with sector based assignments require a commitment to additional staffing.
- I continue to support Town representatives of the Regional School District Planning Board for Amherst, Leverett, Shutesbury, and Pelham developing specific recommendations to amend the current 7-12 agreement to allow participation by member towns in a PreK-12 model.
- Met with DEP, UMass, and Towns of Hadley and Amherst staffs again in November to get an update on the feasibility of siting an anaerobic digestion (AD) facility at UMass Amherst next to our wastewater treatment plant. DEP regulations ban commercial and institutional food waste from landfills effective July 1, 2014. The potential facility will generate electricity as well as reusable organic residual product and will substantially reduce Town sludge disposal costs by also taking sludge from our neighboring wastewater facility. The site is adequate and DEP issued an RFQ/RFP for an AD facility to private firms. DEP's ambitious goal is to start construction in the first quarter of 2015. We are awaiting word from DEP on status and next steps.

- c. negotiating contracts through the collective bargaining process that are reflective of the community's capability and willingness to support, and mindful of the still-recovering economy and conservative projections for the next few years;*
- I have successfully negotiated new 3-year collective bargaining agreements (for period ending June 30, 2016) with police patrol officers, firefighters, SEIU, DPW-S (Supervisors), and DPW rank and file employees. Negotiations continue with the lone remaining employee group, the Police Supervisors. All of the agreements reached to date are within the Town's ability to pay.
 - A data-driven Compensation Study of non-union positions was completed by our consultant Human Resources Services, Inc. with first-rate assistance from our HR Director Deb Radway. The report was reviewed with non-union staff in January and the Personnel Board voted to recommend it to the Select Board on February 5. Subsequently, the Select Board unanimously voted to modernize our compensation plan for non-union employees to position the Town of Amherst as an employer of choice in Western Massachusetts.
- d. pursuing an increased economic development profile to increase the tax base and reduce the burden on residential property taxpayers.*
- Pursuing village center in-fill development consistent with Master Plan principles (see my Kendrick Place and Olympia Place project descriptions in Goal #1 above). Two other projects under construction are Ron Laverdiere's mixed-use professional office building near Pomeroy village center and the Trolley Barn with apartments and ground floor retail designed by Kuhn-Riddle Architects located on Cowls Road in North Amherst.
 - At the May 2014 Annual Town Meeting, members approved Article 25, the Planning Board's proposal to rezone the three properties in the 30+ year old Limited Business (B-L) "core" of the Atkins Corner village center, including the Atkins Farm Market and two Hampshire College properties to the west and south, to Village Center Business (B-VC).
 - Chancellor Subbaswamy and I appointed a Town-Gown Study Steering Committee comprised of a broad and talented cross-section of stakeholders to advise us on our jointly funded study. A consultant team led by U3 Advisors is assisting with a review of the master plans of both the Town and the university to find areas where they coincide, where they may be in conflict, and where opportunities may have been missed. The panel is also looking at techniques used by college towns across the country to address town-gown issues, review housing plans from the Town and expansion plans by the campus, and look at the economic development plans from the Town and UMass Amherst. Housing plans being reviewed include the exploration of economic development strategies for mutual benefit such as creation of taxable student housing to meet the high demand documented in both of the Town's most recent housing studies (the Housing Production Plan and the Comprehensive Housing Market Study). One community meeting has been held and more are planned before final recommendations are presented in the next 90 days.
 - As I outlined at your December 16 meeting, a greater focus on increasing the housing supply and expanding the tax base to include a higher percentage of commercial property have been identified by the Select Board and others as high priorities. I am actively exploring opportunities with potential partners to share resources in this area, including the concept of a

shared Economic Development Director position. It was included on a prioritized list of budget restorations and additions in my FY 15 budget proposal if additional funds were to become available. There is also an opportunity to coordinate this initiative with the Town-Gown Study with UMass.

- The Amherst Business Improvement District (BID), a unique partnership of downtown business property owners, UMass, Amherst College, and the Town formed in 2012, celebrated a milestone when members voted 43-1 on November 22 to renew the BID for another five years per new state legislation. The BID will continue to implement creative marketing, beautification, transportation, and special events to promote our downtown as a place to live, work, and play.
- I negotiated a new 3-year lease for public parking in the newly paved Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst parking lot behind their renovated and expanded building on Kellogg Street. The lot includes one handicapped space, a free 15-minute high turnover space and two metered spaces and re-opened on April 1. Many thanks to the Unitarian Society for working with the Town.

Relationship with the Select Board

2. *The Town Manager shall keep the Select Board fully informed by:*
 - a. *responding to and initiating improved communication efforts;*
 - b. *recognizing that any issue or change that directly or significantly impacts the community falls within the Select Board's authority to provide feedback;*
 - c. *allowing the Select Board opportunity to provide feedback on policy/practice initiatives and changes before implementation;*
 - d. *involving the Select Board in the determination of collective bargaining strategies for the current contract process, and keeping us updated on its progress;*
 - e. *ensuring that all members of the Select Board are aware of anything significant before it appears in the newspaper.*
- I have continued my practice of email and phone alerts and have offered more detailed reports and project updates at Select Board meetings. I have met regularly with the Select Board in executive session to keep you updated on collective bargaining strategy, efforts to preserve affordable housing at Rolling Green and Echo Village Apartments, and on real estate matters related to a c. 61 Right of First Refusal option to purchase the Cows Cushman parcels. I also invited the chair of the Select Board to participate on the Town-Gown Study Steering Committee.

Long Range Planning

3. *The Town Manager shall provide the Select Board with a detailed assessment of Town-owned buildings regarding their current use, and anticipated future benefit and liability. He will make recommendations on whether or not it is in the Town's best interest to maintain ownership of each one. If any recommendations are to repurpose a building or not maintain its ownership, he will suggest how best to proceed.*

- Insufficient progress to date. While detailed individual project proposals for many Town-owned buildings are included in our ongoing five year capital planning process, a single document briefly summarizing long-term recommendations for use/disposal of each building is still under development.
- In recent months, I have recommended and received Select Board and Town Meeting approval to renovate primarily for handicapped accessibility purposes the East Street School in order to relocate LSSE administrative space and create new programming space in addition to the Bangs Community Center. This will allow up to 4000 square feet of basement space at the Bangs to be potentially occupied and leased in 2015 by a Community Health Center in partnership with the Hilltown Community Health Center and Cooley Dickinson Hospital. Its need has been documented by a multi-year planning process to link underserved residents (families; veterans; homeless; new Americans; seniors; seasonal workers, etc.) to essential health services (i.e. medical, dental, nutrition, social worker).
- I have also worked to re-purpose the North Amherst School by leasing upstairs space last fall to the Amherst Family Center to be joined this coming fall by the return of portions of the Head Start program. I also worked with staff to eliminate a chronic shortfall of storage space for municipal records and equipment by renovating the basement for long-term storage.

4. The Town Manager shall help Amherst become a greener, more sustainable community by initiating and advocating for new "green" efforts and programs, and he shall inform the Select Board and the community about these efforts and their results.

- The Town was awarded a Municipal Leading by Example Award by the Commonwealth's Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs in October 2013 for outstanding environmental and energy achievements. The Town was recognized for its designation as a Green Community in 2012 and use of our \$302,000 grant for a streetlight retrofit project that is reducing municipal electricity use by 270,000 kilowatt hours (kWh) per year and yielding annual energy cost savings of \$48,000. In addition to energy efficiency initiatives, the Town's sustainability efforts include our project planting 2,000 trees over three years and on January 1, 2014 becoming one of the first communities in Massachusetts to ban the use of polystyrene products and containers. In 2011, styrene was classified as a carcinogen by the National Toxicology Program (NTP), a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- On December 2, the Town was one of 15 communities invited to participate in the second round of the 2013 Solarize Massachusetts program, a grassroots solar energy marketing, education and group-buying initiative sponsored by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, (Mass CEC) and the Green Communities Division of the Department of Energy Resources (DOER). Amherst's application was submitted by the Town's Sustainability Coordinator Stephanie Ciccarello. I believe that Amherst is an ideal partner for this effort. Many of our residents and small business owners are committed to sustainability and this program allows them the opportunity to further that commitment by having the opportunity to install solar at a more affordable rate on their homes or small business. It is expected that approximately 100 property owners will participate.
- In my dual roles as Town Manager and chair of the PVTa Advisory Board, I worked with community stakeholders including the Town's Public Transportation and Bicycle Committee and the Amherst Survival Center to offer input to the PVTa's recently completed

Comprehensive Service Analysis of regional public bus transportation services, including suggestions to modify or enhance bus service in Amherst and the region. The CSA is a detailed look at current PVTa bus service and ways to redesign it to more closely meet our needs. PVTa looked at each of its bus routes individually as well as the overall network of service to improve their function and cost effectiveness. Specific recommendations to improve service in Amherst and the region were approved by the PVTa Advisory Board on May 28 and will be phased in beginning in September.

5. *The Town Manager shall focus attention on affordable housing needs in Amherst by:*

- a. Supporting the creation of more housing that is safe, decent and affordable for individuals and families at low income levels; and*
 - b. Keeping the Select Board and the larger community apprised of Amherst's status in the State's Subsidized Housing Index (SHI) and factors impacting our SHI percentage in the short- and long-term.*
- On June 11, the Town of Amherst was a recipient of one of the Massachusetts Housing Partnership's 2014 Housing Hero Awards for its collaborative efforts to address the town's affordable housing needs.
 - In the second half of 2013, two Town-commissioned housing studies were completed. The Housing Production Plan focused on needs/opportunities to preserve and create affordable housing units and also provided historical data to document how the growing demand for student housing has helped to drive up market rents, squeeze supply, and further exacerbate our affordable housing challenges. The Comprehensive Housing Market Study was completed by RKG Associates. It includes a prospective Market Study of market rate housing in Amherst for specific target populations, an analysis of the impact of the student rental market on Amherst's overall housing stock other than group housing including both single family and multi-unit residences, a review of existing zoning and general by-laws pertaining to housing, and recommendations regarding currently-proposed and future amendments to said by-laws addressing housing needs in Amherst.
 - Staff and I worked with developer HAP Housing on Olympia Oaks, a 42-unit affordable housing complex nearing completion on Town-owned land at the end of Olympia Drive. Occupancy is expected in September 2014. A celebratory ribbon-cutting occurred June 13.
 - In May, Town Meeting approved for funding a staff proposal for Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding to create two affordable units at the Hawthorne property on East Pleasant Street. The property was acquired by the Town a couple of years ago with CPA funds for affordable housing, open space, and recreation purposes.
 - In May, Town Meeting also approved Article 34 establishing a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust, a tool being used successfully by 70 other Massachusetts communities to create and preserve affordable housing.
 - I worked aggressively along with Assistant Town Manager Dave Ziomek and Town staff with the Commonwealth's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP), the Town's Housing and Sheltering Committee, current owners, and the affordable housing community to preserve affordable units at Rolling Green and Echo Village Apartments. I met with DHCD Undersecretary Aaron Gornstein, MHP, and others on December 3 to explore potential specific funding

opportunities to preserve some/all of the units. This substantive discussion left me with a greater sense of optimism. In February, the current owners of Echo Village Apartments decided not to entertain competitive market-based offers to sell the property to an affordable housing preservation buyer. At the June 3 Special Town Meeting, I was pleased to announce that EQR, the current owner of Rolling Green, has accepted an offer to purchase for Rolling Green from Beacon Communities, a well-respected owner and manager of affordable housing and Beacon's goal is to structure a transaction in which affordability at Rolling Green is maintained. Beacon owns and manages 12,000 apartments throughout the northeast and has extensive experience in affordable and mixed-income housing. I convinced the local Community Preservation Act Committee to increase its commitment of CPA funds from \$750,000 to \$1,250,000. With these funds, Beacon will be able to preserve affordable housing at Rolling Green. As part of the preservation plan, Beacon is also working to secure assistance from the State's Department of Housing and Community Development.

- Staff and I are also working with MHP and DHCD so that as many units as possible at Rolling Green will continue to be counted in our state Subsidized Housing Index (SHI). Stay tuned.
6. *The Town Manager shall create, through consultation with each department's staff, a recommended staffing plan that suggests the optimal number and types of positions in each department to best address current service levels and key needs. This will provide a framework, to be updated as necessary, for prioritizing recommendations for future hiring. Such future recommendations should address the full cost of each position, including post-employment benefits.*
- With the assistance of Human Resources Director Deb Radway, department heads, and staff, I prepared a report to be presented at your July 7 meeting which serves the purposes outlined in the goal statement. The report includes for each Town department under my authority a description of current staffing levels, needs, and opportunities within the next few years. Summary charts for historical and prospective staffing levels by department follow the written report. By its nature, these recommendations are subject to revision as circumstances warrant, but I hope these fulfill the Board's desire for a comprehensive staffing framework to guide our work together in this area moving forward. Near term highest staffing priorities were also incorporated into my proposed FY 15 Town budget proposal on January 16.
7. *The Town Manager shall keep the Select Board apprised of the plan for implementing road and sidewalk paving and other infrastructure work, to include:*
- a. prioritization of work and rationale thereof;*
 - b. anticipated timeline, both short- and long-term;*
 - c. updates to the prioritization or timeline.*
- Using Chapter 90 funds for a vendor to inventory and create new Pavement Management Index tool to inform capital planning for FY 15 and beyond.
 - In the summer and fall of 2013 the following projects were completed: Strong Street paving (East Pleasant <> North East Street), Triangle Street paving and sidewalks (East Pleasant <> Main Street), Lincoln Avenue paving and speed bumps, Dana Street and Blue Hills Road

speed bumps, and Middle School tennis courts paving and walkway near south entrance. From the 2012 Gallagher paving reclamation contract settlement, a Sunderland Road paving overlay (Cowls Road <> Route 116) was completed.

- 2014 road improvement projects in Amherst will total just over \$1 million funded from a combination of Chapter 90 grant funds, settlements, and water/sewer funds. This spring, the Cowls Road <> North Pleasant St seal and North Pleasant Street (Eastman Lane <> Presidential Apartments) seal were completed. Olympia Drive's pavement top coat will be installed this summer using grant funds related to the Olympia Oaks affordable housing project following Town Meeting's acceptance of Olympia Drive as a public way. A paving contract will be awarded later this month and additional streets added to the list.
- Installation of Pine Street water/sewer lines are scheduled to be completed in July to be followed by paving of the base coat this summer/fall and road/bicycle/pedestrian improvements and the top coat of pavement in 2015. This summer, the Public Works Committee will finalize design recommendations for pedestrian and bicycle access. Pine Street water/sewer improvements deal with issues in North Amherst that have been around for more than 15 years. The water line addresses low water flows and pressure and the sewer line offers a secondary route for the Atkins Water Treatment plant backwash water. There are several people off East Pleasant who can confirm what used to be routine sewer line backups.
- DPW staff at my direction are developing design options to improve safety and performance of the East Pleasant Street/Triangle Street intersection. The Public Works Committee this spring has recommended the Town pursue a state Mass Works grant in August for construction of a roundabout at this location that would improve traffic flow and pedestrian safety.
- DPW Superintendent Guilford Mooring is the primary staff liaison to a Transportation Plan Task Force comprised of representatives from the Planning Board, Public Works Committee, and Public Transportation and Bicycle Committee. They have interviewed consultants in June and will be choosing one soon.

Staff and Personnel Relations

8. *The Town Manager shall make high staff morale a priority, by creating a positive workplace culture and providing adequate resources for staff to be effective and successful. Efforts shall include:*
 - a. *increasing communication between himself and staff at all levels, in order to inform, engage and solicit feedback;*
 - b. *encouraging a workplace culture of civility, mentoring and receptivity to new ideas and innovations for improved service delivery;*
 - c. *ensuring that staff have the necessary tools to work efficiently.*
- I am meeting more frequently with smaller groups of employees, typically by department to provide updates, hear their thoughts, and brainstorm on department/community needs and issues.
- I strived to keep non-union employees informed via email and group meetings on the progress and ultimate adoption of the Compensation Study. Implementation of the plan is effective July 1, 2014.

- Over the past many months, I have endeavored to publicly recognize at Select Board meetings, on the Town's website, and in the local media the good work, large and small, and milestones achieved by our many outstanding Town employees. I have also periodically forwarded email summaries of same to all Town staff. I am attempting to do a better job at being more visible/accessible including "management by walking around."
- This spring, I formed an Employee Wellness Committee led by our Public Health Nurse Jennifer Brown. Our goal over the next 1-2 years will be to use effective methods to promote health and wellness by encouraging awareness of health related issues, improve utilization of existing benefits, increase morale and reduce missed time and health care cost.

9. *The Town Manager shall keep the Select Board informed with periodic updates about the implementation progress of action steps identified in the Human Resources Audit.*

- HR Director Deb Radway provided a detailed oral and written HR audit update to the Select Board at your meeting on January 27. There has been an increased focus on professional development, successful negotiation of collective bargaining agreements, and the non-union Compensation Study. In recent months, policies related to CORI checks, sexual and other forms of harassment, and HIPAA training have been completed. This year, nine additional staff members successfully completed the UMass Supervisory Leadership Development Program.

Community and Intergovernmental Relations

10. *The Town Manager shall continue to strengthen relationships with UMass and the Colleges, for concrete progress in areas that improve the community's quality of life by:*

- mitigating the impacts of a significant student population: on neighborhoods, on demand for public safety resources, on parking and traffic issues, and so forth;*
 - compensating for the significant amount of non-taxable property;*
 - pursuing issues of mutual benefit to the Town and the academic institutions;*
 - conducting the Town-Gown study with UMass and working to address its conclusions and recommendations;*
 - completing a new Strategic Partnership Agreement with UMass, as part of addressing points (a) and (b)*
- In the first 6 months of implementing the Residential Rental Property Permitting Program Bylaw effective January 1, 2014 per recommendations from the Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods Work Group and approval by Town Meeting last year, 99% of properties have applied for permits. This extraordinary outreach by Town staff and the response by rental property owners are achieving the Town's objectives of identifying rental properties and their owners/primary contacts in case of issues/emergencies, self-certification of health, life safety, and building code compliance, processing of any necessary ZBA permits and approvals, on-line transparency of property information and permit compliance, and most importantly, on the ground improvements in property upkeep including parking plans in many Amherst neighborhoods.
 - I secured additional funding from UMass in 2013 to increase firefighter/EMS staffing to meet peak demands for services on Friday/Saturday nights during the academic year. An additional \$80,000 was committed by UMass for this purpose for the 2013-2014 academic

year. We are working with the university to review results from this year and plan for the upcoming academic year.

- A Town-Gown Study jointly funded by the Town and UMass is focusing on neighborhood stressors, public safety, housing, and economic development needs and opportunities both short-term and long-term. The study is expected to be completed this summer/fall.
- I am working with university leadership to complete negotiations on an extension of our 6-year old Strategic Partnership Agreement. The new agreement will continue and/or enhance financial support to the Town from UMass for fire/ambulance services, economic development purposes, water reuse, and provide an amount of unrestricted aid for Town services. The agreement will also cover police mutual aid and other in-kind support to the Town.
- An ever-improving collaborative relationship with Amherst College is focusing on improving the health of our downtown with the college's active participation in the Amherst Business Improvement District, coordinating permit requirements for college's ambitious capital plan, and working with them as they develop a long term campus facilities plan that incorporates creative elements to make the edges of campus most welcoming to the community.
- We are working with a team from Hampshire College on Atkins Corner rezoning (successfully adopted by 2014 Annual Town Meeting) and President Lash's ambitious reconfiguration of the campus core including permitting and construction of a new portal building that adheres to the Living Building Challenge, a similar building under development on campus by the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, and campus roadway realignment.

11. The Town Manager shall actively engage the community to provide information about Town successes and challenges, and to seek support for initiatives that address the latter.

- Current year initiatives include my appointment of individuals to a Town-Gown Study Steering Committee broadly representative of the community and involvement of key stakeholder groups to work with me and staff to develop and execute affordable housing strategies. In December, the Town was notified that it would receive the Municipal Website Award from the Massachusetts Municipal Association at its annual conference in January. I also am continuing to periodically post information on my Twitter account.
- On March 1, Town planning staff organized and led a successful Atkins Corner community zoning outreach effort that included a walking tour and forum at Hampshire College.
- I am working with School Superintendent Maria Geryk on a joint initiative we are calling "Amherst Together" to try and bring together Town and School leaders, residents, and businesses committed to action steps to build greater equity and inclusiveness through community collaboration. I will provide a brief overview at your July 7 meeting with more to come in the next several weeks.

12. The Town Manager shall develop specific recommendations to address neighborhood health, safety and quality of life issues.

- Residential Rental Property Permitting Program Bylaw implementation on January 1, 2014. Registration and rental permits are now required for residential rental properties in the Town of Amherst. To obtain a rental permit an owner or their representative will register the property, submit a parking plan, self-certify to compliance with health, safety, fire, noise,

nuisance regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Town of Amherst, and pay a Rental Permit fee of \$100 for each property. A reorganized Inspection Services staff is leading a multi-department coordinated implementation of the bylaw. A redesigned staff position of Permit Administrator is now in place to provide one-stop service for permit applicants.

- Ongoing and increased collaboration with UMass with Town-Gown coordinated patrols, increased fire/EMS staffing, event pre-planning, and student messaging for World Series Celebration following “clinching game” in late October, and the pre-St. Patrick’s Day disturbances that marred a school year in which student discipline cases and related police calls for service actually declined from the prior year.
- Both the Select Board and I thanked our public safety first responders, applauded Chancellor Subbaswamy’s response to the pre-St. Patrick’s Day disturbances, supported the university’s decision to hire former Boston Police Commissioner Ed Davis to develop strategies to prevent such occurrences from happening in the future, and pledged cooperation of Town and public safety leaders to review strategies and tactics with a completely open mind to how collectively we can each contribute to workable solutions.
- Led by Massachusetts Tree Warden of the Year Alan Snow, implementing innovative plan to plant 2000 public shade trees over a 3-year period.